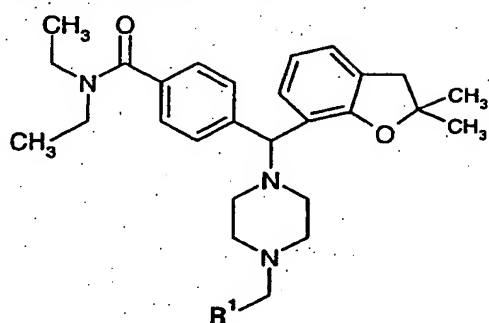


**Claims**

1. A compound according to formula I



5 wherein

$R^1$  is selected from

(i) phenyl;

10 (ii) pyridinyl



(iii) thiophenyl

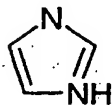


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(iv) furanyl

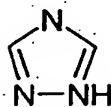


(v) imidazolyl



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(vi) triazolyl



where each R<sup>1</sup> phenyl ring and R<sup>1</sup> heteroaromatic ring may optionally and independently be further substituted by 1, 2 or 3 substituents selected from straight and branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub> alkyl, NO<sub>2</sub>, CF<sub>3</sub>, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub> alkoxy, chloro, fluoro, bromo, and iodo. The substitutions on the phenyl ring and on the heteroaromatic ring may take place in any position on said ring systems;

as well as pharmaceutically acceptable salts and isomers thereof.

2. A compound according to claim 1, wherein the optional substituent(s) on the aromatic or the heteroaromatic ring(s) is selected from any one of NO<sub>2</sub>, iso-butyl, CF<sub>3</sub>, methoxy, methyl, or chloro.

3. A compound according to claim 1 or 2, selected from any one of

- 4-[(4-benzyl-1-piperazinyl)(2,2-dimethyl-2,3-dihydro-1-benzofuran-7-yl)methyl]-*N,N*-diethylbenzamide dihydrochloride (compound 6);
- 4-[(2,2-dimethyl-2,3-dihydro-1-benzofuran-7-yl)[4-(4-iodobenzyl)-1-piperazinyl]methyl]-*N,N*-diethylbenzamide dihydrochloride (compound 7);
- 4-[(2,2-dimethyl-2,3-dihydro-1-benzofuran-7-yl)[4-(3-pyridinylmethyl)-1-piperazinyl]methyl]-*N,N*-diethylbenzamide dihydrochloride (compound 8); and
- 4-[(2,2-dimethyl-2,3-dihydro-1-benzofuran-7-yl)[4-(2-pyridinylmethyl)-1-piperazinyl]methyl]-*N,N*-diethylbenzamide ditrifluoroacetate (compound 9).

4. A compound according to any one of claims 1-3, which compound is present as the (+)-enantiomer.

5. A compound according to anyone of claims 1-3, which compound is present as the (-)-enantiomer.
- 5 6. A compound according to any of the preceding claims, in form of its hydrochloride, sulfate, tartrate or citrate salts.
7. A compound according to any of claims 1-6 for use in therapy.
- 10 8. A compound according to claim 7, wherein the therapy is pain management.
9. A compound according to claim 7, wherein the therapy is directed towards gastrointestinal disorders.
- 15 10. A compound according to claim 7, wherein the therapy is directed towards spinal injuries.
11. A compound according to claim 7, wherein the therapy is directed to disorders of the sympathetic nervous system.
- 20 12. Use of a compound according to formula I of claim 1 for the manufacture of a medicament for use in the treatment of pain.
13. Use of a compound according to formula I of claim 1 for the manufacture of a medicament for use in the treatment of gastrointestinal disorders.
- 25 14. Use of a compound according to formula I of claim 1 for the manufacture of a medicament for use in the treatment of spinal injuries.

15. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of the formula I according to claim 1 as an active ingredient, together with a pharmacologically and pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

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16. A method for the treatment of pain, whereby an effective amount of a compound of the formula I according to claim 1 is administered to a subject in need of pain management.

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17. A method for the treatment of gastrointestinal disorders, whereby an effective amount of a compound of the formula I according to claim 1, is administered to a subject suffering from said gastrointestinal disorder.

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18. A method for the treatment of spinal injuries, whereby an effective amount of a compound of the formula I according to claim 1, is administered to a subject suffering from said spinal injury.